

**MONACANTHIDAE**

filefishes

**Stephanolepis diaspros**

Fraser-Brunner, 1940



Photo : David Darom

Relevant synonyms: *Monacanthus setifer*, *Stephanolepis ocheticus*, *Stephanolepis weberi*

Misidentification: None

Meristic formula: D1, 1; D2, 30-33; A, 30-33; P, 13-14

**SHORT DESCRIPTION**

Body deep and compressed. First dorsal fin consists of a single strong spine with barbs on the posterior edge, originating above posterior margin of eye. Second dorsal fin and anal fin opposite. Second dorsal ray often filamentous. Caudal fin rounded. Pelvic fin absent, but replaced by rudimentary skin. Pointed snout slightly concave dorsally. Small terminal mouth with incisor teeth. Gill opening slit-like, above pectoral fin base. Body covered with rough shagreen-like skin composed of very small scales with delicate spinules. The caudal peduncle of the male may consist of a series of horny patches in several rows.

**color:** body brown to olive green-grey. Dorsal and anal fin yellow to orange.

**common size:** 7-15 cm (max. 20 cm TL).

**DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS**

- *Balistes capriscus*: three dorsal spines

**BIOLOGY / ECOLOGY**

Lives in small groups. Feeds on small invertebrates plucked from rocks. Eggs and larvae are planktonic. Young individuals also feed in open water on sandy and muddy substrate.

**habitat:** coastal rocky substrate, usually with vegetation.

**DISTRIBUTION**

**Worldwide:** Western Indian Ocean: Persian Gulf to the Red Sea.

**Mediterranean:** recorded first from Palestine (Steinitz, 1927); successive records from Syria (Gruvel, 1929); Cyprus (Hornell, 1935); Rhodes (Tortonese, 1946); Gulf of Gabes, Tunisia (Chakroun, 1966), Libya (Elbaraasi *et al.*, 2019) ; Gulf of Taranto, Italy (Tortonese, 1967); Adriatic Sea (Dulčić and Pallaoro, 2003 ; Lipej *et al.*; 2014b) and Izmir Bay, Turkey (Akyol and Özgül, 2015).

**MODE OF INTRODUCTION**

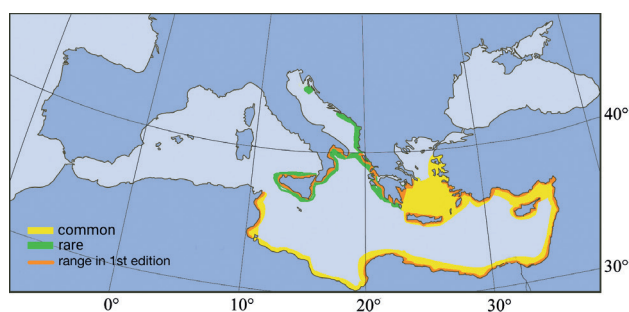
Via the Suez Canal.

**ESTABLISHMENT SUCCESS**

Very common.

**IMPORTANCE TO HUMANS**

No commercial value.



1<sup>st</sup> Med. record  
Palestine, 1927.

**KEY REFERENCES**

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- Dulčić J. and Pallaoro A. 2003. First record of the filefish, *Stephanolepis diaspros* (Monacanthidae), in the Adriatic Sea. *Cybium*, 27: 321-322.
- Elbaraasi H., Elabar B., Elaabidi S., Bashir A., Elsilini O., Shakman E. and Azzurro E. 2019. Updated checklist of bony fishes along the Libyan coasts (Southern Mediterranean Sea). *Mediterranean Marine Science*, 20(1): 90-105.
- Steinitz W. 1927. Beiträge zur Kenntnis der Küstenfauna Palästinas. I. *Pubblicazioni della Stazione Zoologica di Napoli*, 8(3-4): 311-353.
- Tortonese E. 1967. Un pesce pletognato nuovo per i Mari italiani: *Stephanolepis diaspros*, Fraser Brunner. *Doriana, suppl., Annali del Museo civico di storia naturale di Genova*, 4(181): 1-4.